



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport

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By Email

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Martin Ellice
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Dear Mr Fox
Dear Mr Ellice

ACQUISITION BY TRINITY MIRROR PLC (“Trinity Mirror”) OF PUBLISHING ASSETS OF NORTHERN & SHELL MEDIA GROUP LIMITED (“Northern and Shell”) (“the merger”)

I refer to the letter sent to you by DCMS on 1 May 2018, which set out that the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (“the Secretary of State”) had issued a public interest Intervention Notice (“PIIN”) under section 42 of the Enterprise Act 2002 in relation to the merger.

As you are aware, the PIIN required the Competition and Markets Authority (“the CMA”) to report to the Secretary of State on jurisdictional and competition matters, and Ofcom to report on the following two media public interest considerations:

- a) The need for, to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable a sufficient plurality of views in newspapers in each market for newspapers in the United Kingdom or a part of the United Kingdom ('plurality ground'); and
- b) The need for free expression of opinion in newspapers ('free expression of opinion ground').

Accordingly, the Secretary of State asked the Competition and Markets Authority and Ofcom to report to him, in accordance with sections 44 and 44A of the Act respectively, by midnight at the end of Thursday, 31 May 2018. Both reports were received on this date, and are enclosed alongside this letter. They will be published today on the gov.uk website.

The CMA's report concluded that whilst it may be the case that a relevant merger situation has been created, the merger does not give rise to a realistic prospect of substantial lessening of competition in any market. The Secretary of State is required by the Enterprise act to accept the CMA's findings.

Ofcom's report concluded that the merger does not raise concerns in relation to plurality of views, nor does it raise concerns in relation to free expression of opinion in newspapers. The Secretary of State accepted Ofcom's assessment on both these considerations.

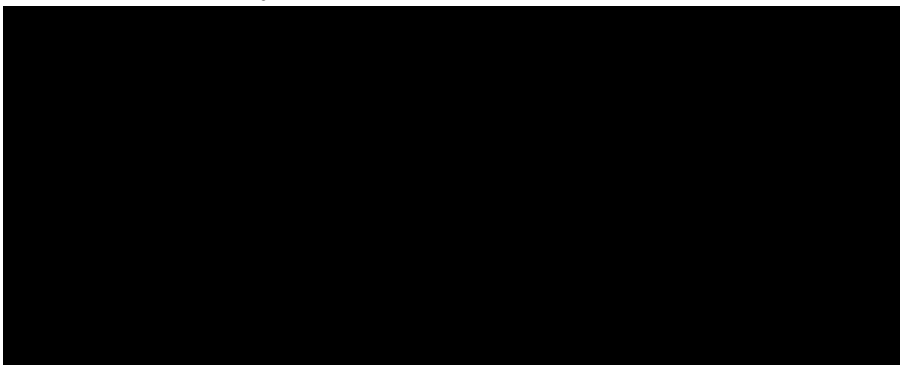
In light of this, and having considered representations submitted by interested parties in response to the PIIN, the Secretary of State has decided that he will not refer the merger for a Phase 2 investigation on the ground that neither of the media public interest considerations cited in the PIIN is relevant to a consideration of the merger.

The Secretary of State has therefore notified the CMA, in accordance with section 56(1) of the Enterprise Act, to deal with the matter from a competition perspective.

The Secretary of State will inform Parliament today of his decision through a Written Ministerial Statement.

I am copying this letter to Reach plc's representatives at Hogan Lovells International LLP.

Yours sincerely



Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Enclosed: one copy each, of the redacted version of the CMA and Ofcom reports